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FREE HIV TESTING ON WORLD AIDS DAY

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Pensacola, Fla. – In observance of World AIDS Day, the Florida Department of Health in Escambia County (FDOH-Escambia) is offering free, rapid HIV testing from our mobile testing unit on Friday, Dec. 1st from 3 to 6 p.m. CST at Raymond Riddle Athletic Park, 1704 North W St, Pensacola, FL. Food and refreshments will be provided while supplies last.

Since 1988, World AIDS Day has become one of the most recognized international health days and is a key opportunity to raise awareness, commemorate those who have passed on, and celebrate victories in the fight against HIV/AIDS—such as increased access to treatment and prevention services like Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP).

More than 1.1 million people in the US are living with HIV, and 1 in 7 of them don't know it. At the end of 2016 (the most recent data available) in Escambia County, Florida, there were 1,331 persons living with HIV or AIDS.

The Florida Department of Health remains fully committed to fighting the spread of HIV and helping connect HIV positive individuals with lifesaving treatment and services. The department and our partners throughout Florida have made great strides in prevention, identifying infections early and getting people into treatment; however, there is still much work to be done. The department is focusing on four key strategies to make an even greater impact on reducing HIV rates in Florida and getting to zero, including:

- Routine screening for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and implementation of CDC testing guidelines;
- Increased testing among high-risk populations and providing immediate access to treatment as well as re-engaging HIV positive persons into the care system, with the ultimate goal of getting HIV positive persons to an undetectable viral load;
- The use of PrEP and non-occupational post-exposure prophylaxis (nPEP) as prevention strategies to reduce the risk of contracting HIV; and
- Increased community outreach and awareness about HIV, high-risk behaviors, the importance of knowing one's status, and if positive, quickly accessing and staying in treatment.

FDOH-Escambia offers HIV testing in their STD clinic and provides assistance with HIV medications. Several community HIV test sites offer free rapid HIV testing with preliminary test results in as little as 15 minutes. For more information about HIV and HIV-related services in Escambia County, please call 850-595-6345 or visit www.EscambiaHealth.com.

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About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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